

Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1. (Amended) A method for billing a customer for waste collection, comprising:

receiving from a customer a pre-estimated amount of recyclable waste, the waste being disposed within a container bearing a representation of content and volume consistent with the pre-estimated amount of recyclable waste;

identifying an the pre-estimated amount of recyclable waste based on the representation of the container;

determining a credit amount value based on the pre-estimated amount of recyclable waste; and

reporting the credit amount value to the customer.

Claims 2-5. (Canceled)

Claim 6. (Amended) A method according to claim 3 1 wherein the container further bears a representation of indicia identifying an approximate value of the recyclable waste contents of the container.

Claim 7. (Original) A method according to claim 1 further comprising:

identifying an amount of non-recyclable waste;

determining a charge amount based on the amount of non-recyclable waste; and

reporting the charge amount to the customer.

Claim 8. (Original) A method according to claim 7 wherein the step of identifying an amount of non-recyclable waste includes identifying a weight.

Claim 9. (Original) A method according to claim 7 wherein the step of reporting includes reporting an aggregate of the charge amount and the credit amount.

Claims 10-15 (Canceled)

Claim 16. (Amended) An apparatus for billing a consumer for trash collection, comprising:
a processor;

a memory connected to said processor storing a program to control the operation of said processor;

the processor operative with the program in the memory to:

receive a container identifier representing content and pre-estimated volume of recyclable waste ~~first amount representing an amount of trash identified as non-recyclable;~~

determine a credit value associated with the recyclable waste based on the container identifier

receive non-recyclable data ~~a second amount~~ representing an amount of trash identified as non-recyclable;

determine a charge value associated with the non-recyclable waste based on the non-recyclable data;

apply the credit value to a customer account ~~a charge based on the first amount;~~

apply the charge value to the customer account ~~a credit based on the second amount;~~ and

report the charge value and credit value to the customer for payment or credit.

Claims 17-20. (Canceled)

Claim 21. (Amended) An apparatus according to claim 16 wherein the container identifier further represents ~~indicia identifies~~ an approximate value of the recyclable waste ~~contents of the container.~~

Claim 22. (Amended) An apparatus according to claim 16 wherein the step of reporting includes reporting an aggregate of the charge value and the credit value.

Claim 23. (Amended) A computer-readable storage medium encoded with processing instructions for implementing method for billing a consumer for trash collection, the processing instructions for directing a computer to perform the steps of:

determining a container identifier representing content and pre-estimated volume of recyclable waste ~~first amount representing an amount of trash identified as non-recyclable;~~

determining a credit value associated with the recyclable waste based on the container identifier

determining non-recyclable data ~~a second amount~~ representing an amount of trash identified as non-recyclable;

determining a charge value associated with the non-recyclable waste based on the non-recyclable data;

applying the credit value to a customer account ~~a charge based on the first amount;~~

applying the charge value to the customer account ~~a credit based on the second amount;~~

and

reporting the charge value and credit value to the customer for payment or credit.

Claim 24. (New) A method for estimating a value of a packaged recyclable, including:

receiving a container of recyclable waste;

identifying an indicia on the container representing at least two physical properties of the recyclable waste; and

determining a value of the recyclable waste based on the indicia.

Claim 25 (New) The method of claim 24, wherein the at least two physical properties of the recyclable waste include material type and pre-estimated weight.

Claim 26 (New) The method of claim 24, wherein the at least two physical properties of the recyclable waste include material type and pre-estimated volume.

Claim 27 (New) The method of claim 24 wherein determining includes employing a lookup table indexed according to the indicia.

Claim 28 (New) The method of claim 24 wherein the at least two physical characteristics are material type and pre-estimated weight, and wherein determining includes employing a mathematical formula to determine the value based on the pre-estimated weight and a value of the material type per unit weight.

Claim 29 (New) The method of claim 24 wherein determining includes employing a lookup table indexed according to the indicia.

Claim 30 (New) The method of claim 24 wherein the at least two physical characteristics are material type and pre-estimated volume, and wherein determining includes employing a mathematical formula to determine the value based on the pre-estimated volume and a value of the material type per unit volume.